

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 013700

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRD, VE

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH DR. MANUEL PEREZ

GUERRERO, VENEZUELA'S MINISTER OF STATE

FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS

FOR THE AMBASSADOR

1. SECRETARY MET FOR ABOUT ONE HOUR ON AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 17 WITH DR. PEREZ GUERRERO, MINISTER OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR BURELLI RIVAS, VENEZUELAN EMBASSY PETROLEUM ATTACHE FELIX ROSSI, ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS, AND HENRY JOHNSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NORTH COAST AFFAIRS, WERE ALSO PRESENT.

2. IN WIDE-RANGING, FREE, AND FRANK EXCHANGE, THE SECRETARY AND THE MINISTER TOUCHED GENERALLY ON U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN POLICY, NEW DIALOGUE, TRADE REFORM ACT, AND NEED FOR IMPROVED PRODUCER-CONSUMER COMMUNICATION ON ALL COMMODITIES.

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3. ON OIL, THE SECRETARY SAID THE U.S. WAS NOT CONCERNED

WITH OPEC PER SE BUT RATHER WITH THE RAPID INCREASE IN OIL PRICES, THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DIFFICULTIES THIS INCREASE HAS CAUSED FOR MANY COUNTRIES, AND THE POSSIBLE

THREAT TO WESTERN CIVILIZATION. THE SECRETARY INDICATED HE THOUGHT THE PRICE ISSUE COULD BE SETTLED ONLY ON THE BASIS OF A COMMON PERCEPTION OF THE LONG-TERM. HE SAID WE WOULD BE WILLING TO TALK WITH OPEC AS SOON AS THE CONSUMERS ARE ORGANIZED AND THAT WE WOULD LIKE TO TALK WITH PRODUCERS ABOUT LONG-TERM PRICE COMMITMENTS IF THEY ARE PREPARED TO TALK ABOUT LONG-TERM SUPPLY COMMITMENTS.

4. ON U.S.-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS, THE SECRETARY STRESSED SERIOUSNESS OF OUR INTENTION TO IMPROVE RELATIONS. HE SAID WE ARE WILLING TO HAVE A DIALOGUE IN EITHER A HEMISPHERIC OR BILATERAL FORUM BUT THAT WE URGENTLY FEEL NEED TO DO SOMETHING BEYOND RHETORIC TO GET RELATIONS WITH OUR OLD FRIEND VENEZUELA BACK ON TRACK. IF VENEZUELANS HAVE ANY PROPOSALS, WE VERY MUCH WANT TO HEAR THEM. THE SECRETARY REQUESTED THE MINISTER SPECIFICALLY TO CONVEY TO PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ OUR DESIRE FOR DIALOGUE AND READINESS TO LISTEN TO VENEZUELA'S IDEAS AND PROPOSALS.

5. THE MINISTER ASKED THE SECRETARY ABOUT HIS PLANS FOR A VISIT TO VENEZUELA. THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT HE FULLY INTENDED TO TRAVEL TO LATIN AMERICA INCLUDING VENEZUELA BUT THAT EVENTS IN MID-EAST MIGHT FORCE HIM TO POSTPONE THE DATE. KISSINGER

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